

Inside Today

Article

Teamwork in Administration: Concepts and Constraints
by Syed Naquib Muslim

Page 4

International

Serbs continue to attack Bihac despite NATO air raid

China, Vietnam agree not to escalate territorial dispute
Page 5

Business

Bangladesh gets \$4.1b ADB loan in 2 decades
OPEC freezes production levels for '95
Pages 6, 7

Feature

Science and Technology

Enso and Monsoon rainfall variation over Bangladesh; Single cell protein—A magic food
Page 8

NEWS BRIEFS

Elections to 25 DU Senate posts put off

Election of 25 registered graduate representatives to the Senate of Dhaka University has been postponed due to unavoidable reasons, said an official announcement yesterday. The election was scheduled to be held outside the capital on January 25 and in Dhaka on January 29 next year, reports UNB.

Students gherao JU VC office

By JU Correspondent

A group of students yesterday gheraoed the office of the Vice Chancellor of the Jahangirnagar University demanding release of the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) leaders. The students demonstrated under the banner of 'General Students Council'. Police arrested five JCD leaders during a pre-dawn raid in five residential halls last Saturday.

DUTA concerned

By DU Correspondent

The Dhaka University Teachers' Association (DUTA) yesterday expressed concern over the incident of snatching of students' attendance registers from the History Department of the University early Monday. The DUTA in a statement demanded exemplary punishment of those involved in the incident and strict security measures on the campus. A group of unidentified armed youths took away five students' attendance registers from the History Department at gun point Monday.

12 killed as volcano erupts

JAKARTA, Nov 22: An Indonesian volcano on the main island of Java erupted today, killing at least 12 people and injuring more than 100, the official Antara news agency said. It quoted hospital officials in Yogyakarta, 400km (250 miles) east of Jakarta, as saying many of the 118 injured people taken to Yogyakarta hospitals were in critical condition, reports Reuter.

Princess Anne in S Africa

JOHANNESBURG, Nov 22: Donning white gloves and a pastel frock, Britain's Princess Anne visited a gritty black township Tuesday during the first official British royal visit to South Africa in 47 years. School children lined the dusty streets inside a squatter camp, singing "Moloti ke di Nako," a traditional wedding song used to greet visitors and newlyweds, reports AP.

Bangladeshi troops on red alert

Hand-to-hand fighting in Bihac suburbs

ZAGREB, Nov 22: Serb troops and Bosnian Croat and Muslim forces were fighting hand-to-hand in the suburbs of Bihac town today, according to the Muslim government-controlled Bihac press agency.

In a report sent to Reuters in Zagreb, it said Serb forces were now only two km away from the centre of Bihac, a UN-designated 'safe area'.

The 1,200 Bangladeshi peacekeepers trapped in the northwestern Bihac enclave remained on maximum red alert and are confined to barracks, a UN Protection Force (UNPROFOR) spokesman said.

Most of the fighting was taking place in mainly Croat-populated villages on the outskirts of the Muslim-dominated town, a Fifth Army corps

source said.

In Sarajevo, UNPROFOR sources said a coalition of Bosnian and Croatian Serbs assisted by Muslim rebels had completely surrounded the 80 square kilometres of the Bihac UN-mandated safe area, from the south, west and east.

Sarajevo radio also reported hand-to-hand fighting south of Bihac.

AFP says, thousands of Bosnian refugees fled fighting in the Bihac enclave today to seek refuge in the UN-designated 'safe area'.

Around 2,000 refugees streamed out of the southern suburbs of the town, close to the Serb front line, to reach the 80 square kilometre 'safe area' staked out around the town, Lisa Jones, spokeswoman for the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), said in Sarajevo.

A Bosnian army source said the stepping up of the fighting in Bihac was accompanied by heavy shelling from Serb-controlled heights across the border in Croatia's Krajina region.

"Artillery attacks on Bihac have been threatening the town since the early evening today," the source said.

Two British sea harrier jets were fired on earlier today by missiles over Serb held territory, a NATO spokesman said.

Canadian colonel Jean Charles Lemieux who is commanding Bangladeshi peacekeepers said Serb heavy weapons of all sorts including

See Page 12 Col 3



A French UN soldier and a woman give first aid to a Bosnian soldier who was hit by a sniper shot at Sarajevo's so-called 'Sniper Avenue' Monday. The Bosnian government soldier, who was crossing the street when he was shot, died seconds later.

— AFP photo

High-level meet reviews Bihac situation

There has been no casualty of any Bangladeshi soldier under the United Nations Protection Forces (UNPROFOR) in Bihac of Bosnia and they are all well, reports UNB.

This was stated at a high-level meeting, chaired by Foreign Minister ASM Mostafizur Rahman held here yesterday, to review the latest situation in Bihac, particularly concerning Bangladeshi contingent currently deployed there under UNPROFOR.

The meeting was told that the government is using all channels to influence the United Nations so that the logistic support reaches the Bangladeshi troops in Bihac urgently. The present supply of stock with the Bangladeshi contingent is sufficient for the time being.

Reviewing all aspects of the situation, it hoped that the UN would resume fresh supplies to the Bangladeshi contingent and other forces currently deployed under the UNPROFOR in Bihac.

See Page 12 Col 6

Opposition now sees no option to resignation

By Nurul Kabir

The parliamentary opposition yesterday resolved that although the time for a mass-resignation from Jatiya Sangsad (JS) was not yet ripe, they were now virtually presented to the Speaker.

"Although we are aware of the fact that the people were not yet ready to see the Opposition resigning from Parliament right at this moment, we have decided to submit resignation, an Awami League leader attending the meeting told The Daily Star.

The constituents of the parliamentary opposition would decide separately the date and time for resignation following meetings at their respective party forums, the AL leader said. The Opposition leaders would then meet again after Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina returned to the city by Saturday.

Hasina is due to leave the capital for Gopalganj this morning.

Another meeting source told this correspondent, on condition of anonymity, that the date for submitting resignation is likely to be announced soon.

See Page 12 Col 1

State Minister Yunus dead

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Nov 22: State Minister for Education Principal Mohammad Yunus Khan died of lung cancer shortly after mid-night last night at his residence at Kauna here. He was 51.

Principal Yunus left behind his parents, wife, three sons and a daughter.

In his student life he was a Chhatra Union leader and later joined National Awami Party (Bhasani).

He joined Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) in 1978 and became the president of BNP Barisal district.

Principal Yunus joined as lecturer of chemistry in Barisal college in the sixties, served in Barisal Women's College and Syed Hatem Ali College. Then he became the founder-principal of Barisal Islamia College.

His namaz-e-janaza was held at Barisal Zila School and Bakerganj College grounds.

President Abdur Rahman Biswas and Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia flew to Barisal to see the mortal remains of the late State Minister for Education who

See Page 12 Col 4

PM goes to Maldives today

By Staff Correspondent

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia leaves here this morning on a two-day official visit to the Maldives at the invitation of President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom, reports UNB.

This is the second in a series of tours to the SAARC countries Begum Zia is undertaking in her capacity as Chairperson of the seven-nation forum. She visited Bhutan in September.

A warm reception will be accorded to the Bangladesh Prime Minister when she arrives at Male International Airport in the afternoon. The arrival and departure of the Prime Minister will be telecast live from Male by the Maldives Television.

President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom and Madam Nasreena Gayoom will greet the Bangladeshi leader at the terminal.

After inspecting a guard of honour at the airport, the SAARC Chairperson will take a ceremonial boat journey to Kurumba Island Resort where she will stay during her visit.

The PM's 35-member entourage to the Indian Ocean

See Page 12 Col 1

\$ 1.3b ADB assistance likely in 4 years

By Staff Correspondent

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) plans to finance 28 projects amounting to 1.3 billion dollars which included 340 million dollars for eight projects under agriculture and rural development sector, 325 million dollars for four projects under energy sector, 335 million dollars for seven projects under social infrastructure sector, 105 million dollars for three projects under finance and industrial sector and 195 million dollars for three projects under transport sector.

This was disclosed by the chief of the bank's programming division, Bhanuphol Horayan-Guru, during a meeting with Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman yesterday. Finance Ministry sources said. The visiting four member ADB delegation led by him called on the finance minister at his Secretariat office. They discussed various ongoing and future ADB-funded development projects in the country.

The leader of the delegation informed the finance minister of the ADB's plan to finance 28 projects in agriculture, rural development, energy, social infrastructure, finance and industry and transport sectors in Bangladesh during the next four years till 1998, the sources said.

The total ADB commitment

Emeka calls for democracy in C'wealth states

ISLAMABAD, Nov 22: The secretary general of the Commonwealth opened a three-day conference today with a call for all member states to embrace democracy, reports AP.

Secretary General Emeka Anyaoku cited the West African nations of Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Gambia as examples of military regimes that should give way to elected governments.

"Commitment to the Commonwealth's fundamental political values, I regret to say, in some cases has been less than encouraging," Anyaoku, a Nigerian, told delegates at a conference hall in Islamabad.

Anyaoku said the recent coup in Gambia was a particular blow to all those who have cherished the traditions and institutions of democracy.

The military regime's recent announcement of a four-year programme for the return to democracy is palpably unacceptable," he said.

He noted there had been democratic advances this year in other Commonwealth states.

South Africa abandoned apartheid with its first all-race

See Page 12 Col 1

Computer fair opens in city

By Staff Correspondent

A two-day fair for display and sale of new computer products at special prices was inaugurated at Hotel Sonargaon yesterday.

President of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) Salman F Rahman while inaugurating the fair said the government should allow private telephone system to help the computer users run their affairs smoothly.

He said the present telecommunication system was not enough for "data transfer". He suggested a separate telephone system via separate communication satellite for computer network.

The FBCCI president also stressed the need for exporting softwares and urged the government to take steps in this regard.

The fair participated by some 25 computer companies, is organised each year since 1992 by the Bangladesh Computer Samity in order to promote sales of computers and to introduce new items to customers.

See Page 12 Col 7

Businessman rescued

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, Nov 22: Azizullah, 40, proprietor of 'Shamrat Enterprise' of Naya Paltan in Dhaka has been rescued by police from Amadi, a remote village along the Sundarbans, under Kotra thana of Khulna district.

The businessman was being held a hostage by a group of miscreants for ransom of ten lakh Taka. He was kidnapped from Dhaka on November 17 and confined to a house at Amadi village.

The police of Khulna and Dhaka rescued him in a joint operation on Monday. Three persons — Shamsher Ali, Akhtarruzzaman and Kamal Hossain all from Sathkhira — have been arrested in this connection.



Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia paying her last respect to late State Minister for Education Principal Md Yunus Khan (inset) at Barisal yesterday. — PID photo

FBCCI to invite political leaders to confce

By Staff Correspondent

The Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) yesterday decided to invite the political leaders from both the government and the opposition to a conference to apprise them of the effect of the present political crisis on the economy.

The FBCCI at a meeting of its Executive Committee expressed grave concern at the failure of the Commonwealth-mediated talks between the opposing political camps and discussed the effect of the political crisis on the economy of the nation.

The meeting presided over by its President Salman F Rahman, however, authorised the President to take all necessary steps for organising the discussion with the rival political groups.

A leading businessman, who is also a leader of the federation, talking to The Daily Star last night, said if the move by the FBCCI for ending the political crisis is successful, the government will take all necessary steps for organising the discussion with the rival political groups.

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The meeting presided over by its president Salman F Rahman expressed grave concern at the failure of dialogue between the government and the opposition and apprehended that the failure would cause political unrest leading to destructive programmes like hartal.

The leaders of the federation

See Page 12 Col 2

Decision to keep shops open on weekly holidays

By Staff Correspondent